

REMARKS

This Amendment responds to the final Office Action mailed January 31, 2006 and is being enclosed with a Request for Continued Examination submitted concurrently herewith. This Amendment represents a submission fully responsive to the January 31, 2006 Office Action, as required under 37 CFR § 1.114.

Claims 1, 2, 4-24 and 32-34 are pending before this Amendment. Claims 7, 10, 14, 18 and 19 have been cancelled and claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8, 9, 11-13, 15-17, 20-24, and 32-34 have been amended. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 32-34 are allowed and that claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 9-11, and 16-24 are allowable. In view of the foregoing amendments, as well as the following remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in complete condition for allowance and requests reconsideration of the application in this regard.

Claim Objections

Applicant has amended claim 15 to eliminate the informality noted by the Examiner.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,687,589 (Schrenk). Claims 1, 6, 8, 12, 14, and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,732,716 (Sakunaga et al.). Applicant has amended claim 1 in a manner believed to introduce subject matter formerly found in allowable dependent claim 7. Dependent claim 7, now cancelled, set forth that "said plurality of flow passageways

divide the flow of the thermoplastic material supplied from the plurality of supply inlets into individual streams having a spaced relationship in a machine direction orthogonal to the cross-machine direction.” Claim 1, as amended to add the subject matter of claim 7, now reads “said plurality of flow passageways arranged in a plurality of rows, each of said plurality of rows aligned in the cross-machine direction, adjacent pairs of said plurality of rows being arranged in a spaced relationship relative to each other in a machine direction, and said plurality of passageways in each of said plurality of rows distributing the thermoplastic material in the cross-machine and machine directions.” Applicant has amended claim 8 to introduce subject matter formerly found in allowable dependent claim 10. Dependent claim 10, now cancelled, set forth “flow paths through each of said plurality of flow passageways to each of said first plurality of slots are substantially equal and substantially symmetrical in the cross-machine direction.”

Claim 8, as amended to add the subject matter of claim 10, now reads “each of said plurality of flow passageways being substantially equal and substantially symmetrical in the cross-machine direction.” Applicant requests that the rejections be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicant has made a bona fide effort to respond to each and every requirement set forth in the Office Action. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is submitted to be in complete condition for allowance and, accordingly, a timely notice of allowance to this effect is earnestly solicited. In the event that any issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant’s undersigned representative to expedite issuance of this application.

Applicant does not believe fees are dues in connection with filing this communication, other than a one month extension fee and the fee for a Request for Continued Examination. If, however, any additional fees are necessary because of this communication, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any under-payment or fees associated with this communication, or to credit any over-payment to Deposit Account No. 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,
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